The purpose of this module is to improve the church's witness to postmoderns.

The objectives of this module are to:

- Become aware of the impacts of postmodernism on culture and belief.
- Explore strategies for overcoming postmodern resistance to the Gospel.
- Learn questions that can be used to start spiritual conversations with postmoderns.



Lecture

Fill in the blanks below as you follow along with the lecture.

I. Posti	modernism Ameri	can culture.											
	A. Many people believe there is	no single truth and are	of anything cla	iming to be									
 B. They may even there is such a thing as "reality," believing instead that each creates their own reality. C. Relativism, a common element of postmodern thought, all points of view valid. D. People, especially young people, who value being seen as bright or smart have been 													
							by postmodernism to reject religion on the basis of perceived flaws in logic, scientif						
							proof, or apparent contradictions within the faith community.						
						II. The	apostle Paul a situ	uation similar to postmodernism wh	nen he travels to A	thens in Acts 17:			
						16-34.							
	A. Paul finds the city full of false idols, a community immersed in relativism, and												
	spiritual conversations with the people he meets in the marketplace.												
	B. Soon, he is by a group of local philosophers who seem open to considering the												
	Gospel as just another of their many religions.												
C. Paul them there is one true God who "gives everyone life and breath and				ath and									
	everything else" and that God has "set a day when he will judge the world with justice."												
	D. When he tells them about Jes	us' resurrection, some of the peopl	e I	Paul, but some of									
	them believe and become his followers.												

III. A	A positive effect of postmodernism is that people, like the philosophers Paul met in Athens, are	
	about the meaningful experiences of others.	
	A. Over time, postmodernism has the cultural desire to use a variety of experiences in	in
	the search for value and meaning.	
	B. Remember that postmoderns are of absolutes and skeptical of anything that may	be
	contrived or insincere. The effective witness first establishes a trusting friendship.	
	C. Honest friendship a safe environment where both people can share their	
	experiences, beliefs and faith.	
IV. N	Many people who are in postmodernism are former church goers.	
	A. Lapsed churchgoers often deeply spiritual conversations.	
	B. Those who have breaks in relationships at church may have a difficult time trustin	g
	churchgoers even though they sense the absence of God in their lives.	
	C. People who feel by God because of some past or present suffering may be hesitar	١t
	to accept the Gospel as truth, even though they want to believe.	
	D. People who have been hurt by the church are often eager to tell you about their past. By	
	and acknowledging their pain, you show the love of Christ that overcomes past wron	gs.
V. A	A rapidly growing section of the population from Generation X or Y has up without the	
influ	uence of religion.	
	A. These young people are to misconceptions about God, religion and the church	
	because they draw their information from popular culture, television, movies and their own past	
	experiences.	
	B. As part of the postmodern generation, the young and unchurched are likely to be	to
	conversation.	
	C. First, build a relationship and develop with individuals you encounter. Your day-to) -
	day life of faith is a witness of God's grace.	
	Postmodernism presents a to the church, however it can be overcome by congregations	
and i	individuals who are genuinely engaged in their community.	
	A. Keep the conversation An honest relationship and patience are essential.	
	B. Don't it. Your day-to-day life with Christ speaks louder than your words.	
	C. Remember, the Spirit is working in each of our lives. God us in our relationships w	/ith
	the unchurched.	
	D. Consider each individual's level with spiritual matters when sharing your faith.	

E. People who have grown up in	n a postmodern world are conditioned to	conflict. If				
you find you disagree on an issue or topic, it may be best to "agree to disagree." Presenting your ideas						
as right or superior will likely damage your new relationship.						
F. Propose, rather than	, your theological beliefs.					

Small Group Exercise

Starter Questions for a Lapsed Former Churchgoer

- 1. If you could ask God a question what would it be?
- 2. What is your idea of heaven?
- 3. What is something you believe will last forever?
- 4. What do you feel strongly enough about to protest?
- 5. What is one thing you are sure about?

Starter Questions for the Young & Unchurched

- 1. Do you give much thought to God and spiritual things?
- 2. What is something you think will last forever?
- 3. Do you feel you have a purpose or calling in life?
- 4. What do you have in common with your parents?
- 5. What traditions did your family have?
- 6. When was the most peaceful day you've had?

Circle the questions in each group that seem most useful and appealing to you. Why did you choose these questions?

What kinds of spiritual conversations could you begin with the questions? Choose two or three questions as a group. Then take a moment to predict how the conversations could proceed and what you would share with an unchurched friend.

Take a moment to step into someone else's shoes. If you were an unchurched postmodern, how would you feel if someone asked you these questions? Choose one or two questions and discuss how it might make you feel.

Evaluation and Planning

Use the table below to plan the spiritual conversations you want to have with friends or acquaintances living in a postmodern world.

Identify the relationship building steps you need to take to establish trust before you can have a conversation about spiritual matters. Then, consider what kind of questions you would ask to start a spiritual conversation with each individual.

People in the Postmodern World	Steps to Build Our Relationship	Possible Questions to Start Spiritual Conversations
Unchurched young people:	•	•
Lapsed churchgoers:		